

Crispin the Cobler's
CONFUTATION
OF
BEN HOADLEY,

In an Epistle to him.

Brother *BEN*,

WE have a Proverb among us of Setting one Thief to catch another; and certainly that Cause can never appear in so clear a Light, as when both the Disputants are upon the Level. Upon these Considerations I have undertook to confute you; and if I take a more than ordinary Freedom, 'tis not because I have no Regard to your Cloth and Function, but rather because we are upon an Equality, You a Cobler of Divinity, a Translator of Government, and I of Shoes. And tho' you may boast perhaps of Bishops and Presbyters, Men of the clearest Argument, and best Reasoning your Adversaries, yet I'll be bold to without Vanity, you have never met your Match.



MUSEUM

now. If you urge the State of Nature in your Defence, I have nothing else to say, but 'tis an Argument only calculated for *Hockley in the hole*. But that you should not have too mean an Opinion of your Antagonist, I can assure he has been at Grammar-School; and to shew you he is a Person of no inconsiderable Reading and Quotation, Mr. Robinson, in his admirable and useful Treatise concerning *Heteroclitics*, which is said to be wrote upon the several Sectaries among us, speaking of a Buckram-man, uses this remarkable Expression,

Nec vult Panthera domari.

'Tis but like taming of a Shrew, says he, to talk to those who are altogether deaf, either to Reason, Philosophy, or Revelation.

As to Government, it seems to me to be a Shoe, (for every one apprehends in his own way) made of stretching Leather, and worn as well for the Ease as the Safety of one's Foot. St. Paul was undoubtedly a good Shoemaker, and never went beyond his Last; but you have acted like a horrid Bungler, to go to heel-piece a Shoe that never wanted mending, nor is it possible it ever should. But I have more reason to complain than all this, as you'll find by the Sequel; neither can I find in my heart to *maul you Damnably*, as my Author has it, being fully satisfy'd, *That he that's born to be Hang'd can never be Drown'd*.

I was always reputed a sober, trusty Fellow, before my Acquaintance with your *Bear-garden Principles*, that got a Livelihood in an honest Way; I meddled with no Body's Business but my own, and 'twould have been well if you had done so too. I confess, I was hugely taken with the Doctor, being a good, jolly, likely Man, and have now and then cry'd, *Huzza, Church and Cheverell*, in a civil Society. I always hated Tub-preaching, and thought a Church of England Cobbler a better Fellow than a Conventicle Puzzle-Text. But hear upon what

Motives

Motives I was converted, or rather confounded, to the eternal Shame and Dishonour of our Family and Profession.

A Neighbour of mine, who was a Weaver, and an *Ahabapish* Teacher, and always look'd upon to be a Sly-boots, coming to my Stall one day, told me very gravely, I was a Fool to run after this *Cheverell's* A—se for nothing, that he was a *Papish Pretender's-Man*, and the L—d knows what; and that his Man had been heard by a Friend of his, who Din'd with him during the Tryal; to Curse and Swear at his Dinner. He preaches up *Passive Obedience*, says he, that is, to do every thing the Queen commands you, whether right or wrong, for, or against Law; You can't say your Soul's your own, your Wife, your Children, nay that piece of Leather there, and everything in your shop is hers. This stuck pretty much in my stomach, the last especially, and I began to scratch where it never itch'd. The old Sinner finding me at a Nonplus, honest *Crispin*, quoth he, be rul'd by me, and I'll make a Man of thee: This Hordly they cry so much against, is a very honest Fellow; I'll lend thee his Books, and instruct thee what he is driving at: Thou dost not remember how we liv'd in *Oliver's Days*, I my self was a Committee-man, kept my fine Horses, and a Brace of Sisters; eat Beef, drank Ale, Swore and Curs'd at the Bishop's and Common-Prayer, was a Prick in my own House, and an Independent Bully. A Mushroom-man, however reproach'd in this Age, is a Person of a superior Genius, that calls Government, and very justly too, an Imprisonment of Nature, that would sooner go naked, like some of our Ancestors, than be confus'd; or, if he is forc'd to wear any thing, he glories in the Latitude of his Brackets. For shame never muddle on at this rate: Be a Whigg, follow Hordly, Curse your Magistrates and Superiours, and you'll soon find the World thrive upon you.

Upon this, you must know, I began to prick up my Ears, and had a huge Mind to be a Committee-Man; I borrow'd his Books, got 'em by heart, and to say the Truth on't, never thought of any thing but modelling of

of Government, while I had 'em by me. I grew indeed, in a little time perfectly distracted, my Wit run a Wool-gathering, as the saying is, in the Anarchy of thy Notions; if any Body wanted a Pair of Shoes to be soal'd, I usually laid before 'em the Necessity of Resistance, and the great Benefit of Original Compact. If a Foot-man came with his Master's Shoes to be clean'd, I declaim'd against the State of Servitude and Bondage he underwent, told him strange Stories, if his Master went on Hair's Breadth beyond his Duty, he was a Tyrant, that it was lawful for him to nubble him; nor could this Resistance be call'd Rebellion but Self-Preservation. I prevail'd so far upon some Footmen that they lost their Places, and I my Livelihood, for only exercising the Liberty of Persons that are Free-born. And here indeed I can by no means reconcile 'Squire Bickerstaff and Mr. Hoody, the one asserting, I had ingeniously contriv'd an Inferiour; the other, that my Sovereign is my Subject.

My Brother of the we Religion some time after came to see me, and finding me a great Proficient, commended me wonderously, told me I should go with him from Coffee-house to Coffee-house to be the Champion of the Cause. I soon began to bamboozle Mankind, and became as formidable from the Change to the Temple, as any Politician of them all. *J-bus-n*, *Tim*, the Book-seller, and *Sal Volatile Oleosum*, stood mute in my Presence, and once in less than an Hour I gain'd the Victory over a Doctor of Physick, a Parson, and a Brace of Fidlers. I have often cut off the Head of Monarchy in the twinkling of a Bedstaff, and kill'd Hereditary Right ten times in an Hour, without the Assistance of an Ax. How many Common-Council-Men, Church-wardens, Constables, Change-brokers, Insurers, Stock-jobbers, Petty-foggers, Scavengers, have I demolish'd? How many cleaver Fellows wou'd be glad to off with, G's thy Hand, *Honest Crispin*, you and I are Friends for all this. And the Reception generally met with from the Gaping Coffee-house Congregation, was a farther Spur to my Vanity; if I rang'd an Argument, told a Story about the late Scrutiny in the City, prov'd Sir Q. B. no butcher,

Butcher, or made *Peter* deny his Master. If I confuted *Bellarmino*, or *Abel Koper*, the Dugdale Antiquarian Newsmonger, I always was receiv'd with the Demonstrations of Approbation and Astonishment; such, as, indeed! belike! say you so! very strange! a sad Story! who would think it!

By this time you'll suppose I was at the Top of my Preferment, applauded by my Friends, and fear'd by my Enemies. The *Presbyterian* said I was a Man of Spiritual Knowledge; the Independent call'd me Gifted; the *Quaker* cry'd out, O the Light within! But the *Tory*, the Devil of a Cobler! I spent my time very agreeably all this while; I confuted at Noon about Change, Din'd with some Elder of *Salter's-Hall*; about the Evening I exercis'd near *St. Paul's*, or the Temple; and at Night in the Chambers of the Beloved.

It happen'd in the mean while, my Son *Jack* being a smart Youth had peep'd into thy Sermons and Defence, con'd 'em over to his Mother, and was grown a Dab at *Revolution Principles*. I was mightily pleas'd, you may suppose; but coming home one Day, it fell out otherways than I imagin'd. My Crooked Rib told me she had nothing in the House, desir'd me to give her some Money to buy an Ox Cheek, adding also that *Jack* wanted a Pair of Stockings; she told me farther, that when I follow'd my Cobling, it was much better for my Family, that she thought I had better return to it, than run after this Rantipole way of Talk, and let them starve at home. Upon this I began to take fire, Dost thou think, says I, that I, who am look'd upon to be a Scholar, can't manage my Affairs without thy Directions, or that I'll be controul'd by such a Baggage? she replys immediately, I was oblig'd by the Law of Nature and the Gospel, to take care of my Family, that by not doing it, according to my beloved *Hoadly*, I was no more a Husband, or a Father. I was going to chastise her Insolence, when *Jack* took up the Poker, and telling me Resistance was lawful upon such Occasions, gave me such a Baster upon the Head, that it was two Months before I perfectly recover'd.

As

As soon as I came to myself, I began to reflect upon my past Conduct, call'd for Mr. *Hoadly*, took a Review of him, weigh'd him more maturely than ever, and committing him to the *Flames*. This indeed must be a very inconsistent Scheme of Government, thinks I, that gives me an Authority to call my Prince in question, and Depose him, and must be Depos'd myself from my *Throne*, and Habitation. Shant' he that is sovereign to his *Queen*, be the master of his own House? But Rebellion to a Prince is the same as to a Parent; and the same Law that bids us be subject to the one, commands Obedience to the other. What occasion had I to read these *Notions*? Wou'd not the Fifth Commandment have spoke more intelligibly? Has not *St. Paul* spoke for himself more than ever *Hoadly* did for him? And cou'd not I have seen this with half an *Eye*, without being reduc'd to these deplorable Circumstances for conviction, without having this Argument so unhappily brought home to me? No; if I had search'd for my Duty in the Scripture, where the Case is plain to every one's Understanding, I had been a better Christian, a better Subject, and a better Friend to my self and Family.

Indeed Friend *Ber*, you do a great deal of harm to set us at Variance at this rate, to sound the Trumpet of Resistance. I'll only call it, out of respect to you, when you your self own there is no Occasion for it. I know no other Difference between a Bearward and a Rebel, but that one is muzzling the Bear, and the other for murdering the Lion. Take which you will, I am very well satisfy'd; and this I dare assert, if you have not committed Regicide upon Monarchy, you have reduc'd her to go with Crutches, the Wooden Supporters of your self and Cause. Can't we say the *Queen's* Hereditary without an Affront to the Revolution, without having a Reason of a different Make and Turn from the rest of Mankind, or a Faith completely ripe for Transubstantiation? Or is it not better sense, and less Dishonesty, to assert it, than for a Pluralist to inveigh against the Heighnouse of Pluralities.

I have wrote this Account of my self to convince you, if possible, of the ill Effects of your Doctrine; and if the Brother of St. *Catherines* has a mind to write the Life of the Renown'd *Crispin*, I'll freely give him leave, and can assure him I'll never answer him; and, I believe, he has a copious Subject enough, since there are as many Stories upon Coblers, as upon Parsons. Be advis'd then by me, if thou art not so great a Lover of Truth as to recant, nor hast so great a Respect for St. *Paul*, as to beg his Pardon, be so prudent however, as to disturb us no more with the Measures of thy Obedience, when every Cobler may discern the Fallacy. And if this Instance, this Example of my self before thine Eyes won't deter thee, may'tt thou be convinc'd by thy Wife, thy Children, and thy Servants, and the seasonable Arguments of a Ladle, a Poker, or a Fireshovel I am,

Thy BROTHER,

and Well-wisher,

CRISPIN.



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